

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 9018

LIMDIS

DEPT PLS PASS ALL ARA POSTS AS APPROPRIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, CO

SUBJ: LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN BOGOTA

REF: BOGOTA 9017

1. AT MY REQUEST FOREIGN MINISTER VAZQUEZ CARRIZOSA RECEIVED ME THE AFTERNOON OF NOV 2. VAZQUEZ LED OFF THE CONVERSATION SAYING HE HAD JUST SPOKEN ON THE TELEPHONE WITH GOC AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON AND ASKING IF I HAD YET RECEIVED THE IMMEDIATE CABLE FROM WASHINGTON REGARDING THE SECRETARY'S INABILITY TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE. I REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE BUT SAID I KNEW MORE OR LESS WHAT IT CONTAINED AND HANDED HIM THE NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY ACKNOWLEDGING VAZQUEZ' LETTER OF CONGRATULATION ON THE SECRETARY'S NOBEL PEACE PRIZE HONOR. VAZQUEZ WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE ESPECIALLY THE REFERENCES TO "YOUR OWN DEDICATION TO DIALOGUE" AND THE "I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AND OUR COLLEAGUES IN THE HEMISPHERE OVER THE COMING MONTHS". AFTER ASCERTAINING THAT WE HAD NO OBJECTION, VAZQUEZ ORDERED THE MESSAGE RELEASED TO THE PRESS.

2. THEN DRAWING ON VARIOUS DEPT TELEGRAMS, PARTICULARLY DEPTTEL
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11652, I MADE SURE THAT VAZQUEZ WAS AWARE OF OUR VIEWS REGARDING

BOTH THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE POTENTIAL OF THE CONFERENCE. AS THE DISCUSSION DEVELOPED IT TURNED OUT THAT VAZQUEZ AND WE HAVE VERY SIMILAR IDEAS ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED AND WHAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED.

A. VAZQUEZ WISHES TO AVOID A FORMAL, HIGHLY STRUCTURED FORUM. HE HOPES FOR AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS IN A FRANK AND OPEN MANNER WITH NO VOTING BUT AGREEMENT ON A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES AND A LIST OF TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THE SECRETARY.

B. HE BELIEVES THE BOGOTA MEETING SHOULD NOT SET UNDULY AMBITIOUS GOALS FOR THE MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY. VAZQUEZ UNDERSTANDS THAT THE SECRETARY WILL WANT FLEXIBILITY TO TALK WITH ALL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS AND TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT A FINISHED PRODUCT SHOULD COME OUT OF EITHER THE BOGOTA MEETING OR THE SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY.

IN ADDITION, VAZQUEZ VOLUNTEERED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

A. THE MEETING OF EXPERTS WILL BEGIN ON NOV 8. INVITATIONS HAVE GONE TO ALL PARTICIPANTS BUT HE HOPES THAT NOT ALL WILL ATTEND. MANY GOVTS HE KNOWS WILL ACCREDIT THEIR CHIEFS OF MISSION HERE IN BOGOTA TO ATTEND THIS PRE-CONFERENCE. IT IS DURING HEE MEETING OF EXPERTS THAT VAZQUEZ HOPES TO SET THE TONE OF THE CONFERENCE. HE HAS ASKED THE FOREIGN MINISTERS TO ARRIVE IN BOGOTA SUFFICIENTLY IN ADVANCE OF THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE IN ORDER THAT THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS CAN ADEQUATELY BRIEF THEM.

B. AT THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S MEETING THERE WILL BE NO GENERAL DEBATE AND NO VOTING. THERE WILL BE A FINAL DECLARATION STATING A CONSENSUS OF PRINCIPLES AND INCLUDING A LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR DIALOGUE WITH THE SECRETARY.

C. THE AGENDA WILL CONTAIN NOTHING ABOUT THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE OAS.

3. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTION, HE RESPONDED THAT HE WILL ALLOW GOVTS TO BE REPRESENTED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE FOREIGN MINISTER. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE PRIOR COMMITMENTS OF THE BRAZILIAN AND ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTERS BUT HAD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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THEY WOULD BE REPRESENTED.

4. AS THE MEETING DREW TO A CLOSE, I WISHED HIM WELL ON HIS TRIP TO VENEZUELA AND HE RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH ME AS SOON AS HE RETURNED.

5. VAZQUEZ REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED HIS PLEASURE THAT THE US AND COLOMBIA HAVE SIMILAR POINTS OF VIEW REGARDING THE OBJECTIVES

TO BE ATTAINED AND THE PITFALLS TO BE AVOIDED AT THIS CONFERENCE.

6. COMMENT: VAZQUEZ IS SHREWD AND ADEPT AT TELLING PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT TO HEAR BUT I AM SATISFIED THAT HE HAS REPRESENTED HIS OBJECTIVES FOR THE CONFERENCE IN A CANDID AND TRUTHFUL WAY. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER VAZQUEZ CAN EXERCISE THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OVER HIS COLLEAGUES THAT WILL ENABLE HIM TO BEND THE CONFERENCE AS HE DESIRES.

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